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The Chancellor of Egypt

BEALE

THE CHANCELLOR OF EGYPT

A DRAMATIZATION OF THE BIBLE STORY
OF JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN
IN FOUR ACTS

BY

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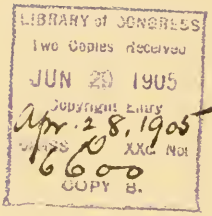

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THE CHANCELLOR OF EGYPT

ACT I.

Scene First. *Exterior of Jacob's house near Hebron.* **Zareda,** *a hand-maid of* **Leah,** *sitting absent-mindedly looking toward the country, with implements for carding wool upon her knees.*

Zareda. Oh, how fair are the fields and the sky to-day, and how beautiful are the northern hills. Would that I could see beyond them the home of my mother, and my brothers and sisters as they used to be in the old free life of my childhood. (*A dove alights near her.*) O dove, if Zareda had wings like thine, how soon would she fly away over those hills and beyond the great river. But then I fear that after all I should soon fly back again unless — unless Benjamin were in that country, too.

Enter **Zephorah,** *a maid-servant coming from the field.*

Zephorah. Well, Mistress Idler, what art thou dreaming of? Is it not enough that thou sittest at home while we work in the field, but thou must lay thy hands upon thy knees and dream? Thou carriest thy head high, and vauntest thy gentle birth among the servants of thy master. Gentle birth, indeed! Thy mistress shall know, directly, how thou art idling thy time, and thy undone work shall be proof against thee.

Zareda. O, Zephorah!

Zephorah. Oh, yes. Zephorah hath hurt thy feelings again, and thy mistress, as usual, will only pity thee. Con-

tinue thy dreams, Zareda, thy gentle birth doth save both thy hands from work and thy back from stripes.

(*Passes to the rear of the house, leaving* **Zareda** *in tears. Enter* **Leah,** *coming from the door of the house.*)

Leah. Why, Zareda, my daughter, what aileth thee? Thou art in tears and thy work but half completed. Art thou ill? or art thou discontented with thy lot?

Zareda. Oh no, my mistress. I am not ill, nor am I really discontent. I do confess to thee, my mistress, that I lost myself for a little while in looking at the fields and the sky and the northern hills, behind which are my mother's people. But thou and my master Jacob art ever kind to me, and Joseph and Benjamin are to me as brothers.

Leah. Zephorah hath been chiding thee.

Zareda. Yes, my mistress. But I pray thee lay it not against her. I grieve more that thou hast found my work unfinished, than that she hath taunted me with idleness and pride. Have patience with me, my mistress, and I will not forget myself again.

Leah. Truly thou shouldst have been more thoughtful. Thy master and his sons would wear their garments threadbare if all the women of the household should be idle. There, there, dry thy tears, Zareda, and take thy pitcher to the well. Joseph goes from us this morning, and must be well refreshed before he begins his journey.

(**Zareda** *takes water pitcher and goes out.* **Jacob** *enters, coming from the field.*)

Leah. Why, Jacob, my husband. Thou returnest early. Is it not well with thee?

Jacob. Yes, Leah, all is well; although I have walked faster than is my wont and the sun is warm, even now. I have news for thee from thy father Laban. (*Handing her a*

letter.) The messenger met me on the road. I urged him to come in to us and refresh himself; but he hath an important errand which required haste and would not stop. (*After a brief pause, while* **Leah** *reads.*) Is all well in thy father's house?

Leah. All is well, Jacob. My father wishes very much to see our younger sons, Joseph and Benjamin, whom he hath never seen, and begs us to arrange for them to visit him.

Jacob. They shall do so some day, Leah. Now I cannot spare them. (*Sits.*)

Leah. Joseph goes from us to-day to see his brethren.

Jacob. Yes. He is now looking about the fields to see that all is well before he leaves us. We are greatly blessed to have so good a son.

Leah. Yes, Jacob. And I have a strange foreboding of ill to him. I wish thou needest not to send him on so long and lonely a journey.

Jacob. Leah, my wife. Thou needest not fear for Joseph. He is a good lad, and there is none more brave in Canaan. The Lord will protect him and bring him again in peace.

Leah. I know he is both brave and good. But the way is long and lonely and his brothers do not feel so kindly toward him as they should. He is not my son, Jacob; but thou knowest that my sister, when she died, charged me to be a mother to him. And so devoted hath he always been to me that I have loved him as my own. The very care I feel for him makes me dread what may befall him. The table is spread, my husband; come thou and refresh thyself.

Jacob. (*Rising and going toward the door.*) Thou art a good wife, Leah; and thy sister's sons do well to honor thee.

(*Both go into the house and* **Zareda** *enters, returning from the well with* **Benjamin,** *who is carrying her water pitcher.*)

Benjamin. There, Zareda, (*handing her the pitcher*) when I am a full grown man, and thou art become a woman, thou shalt not carry water.

Zareda. What *shall* I do, Benjamin?

Benj. Thou shalt wear fine garments and sit in my house and be the greatest lady in the land. Thy servants shall carry water for thee, and for thy household and mine.

Zareda. Thou must not speak thus, Benjamin; though thou art a gracious lad to think it of me. I am a servant and a stranger in thy father's house.

Benj. My father hath also been a servant, Zareda. Fourteen years he served his uncle Laban before he obtained his heart's desire, my mother and his freedom, both in one. And if thou art a stranger, I and my father's family are strangers in a strange land. Wouldst thou not let me care for thee, Zareda?

Zareda. *I* would care for *thee,* always, Benjamin; and be happy if I might always serve thee.

Enter **Joseph** *unobserved.*

Benj. I tell thee thou shalt be no more a servant, but be served thyself. If need be, I myself will be a hired servant to my father until I have bought thy freedom, and am free to take thee to my house.

(*Voice calling* **"Zareda!"**)

Zareda. Thy mother calleth for me. I must go quickly. I thank thee for thy kindness, Benjamin.

(**Benjamin** *looks after her as she goes to the house.*)

Joseph. So, my brother, thou hast become a captive to the Chaldeans without a struggle; and art planning by a struggle to obtain thy freedom.

Benj. (*With spirit.*) I care not that thou heardst me, Joseph, though I spoke not for thine ears. I am coming to be a man, and know my mind. I do not ask for favors. Though Zareda is now a servant, I love her; and if she will let me, I will some day make her free and take her for my wife; and I am not ashamed to let the whole house of Israel know of it.

Jos. (*Striking* **Benjamin** *upon the shoulder and taking his hand.*) Thou speakest like a true son of thy father, Benjamin, and I am proud of thee. I was an unwilling listener, and thy secret is safe with me.

Thou *must* be a man, Benjamin. I go away to-day to visit our brethren, and it may be many days before I return. Thou art left alone. Be thou to our father as eleven sons. Look well to the fields and to the creatures, and see that nothing lack, and none suffer. Deal thou very kindly with our mother, Leah. Remember she hath nourished thee from thine infancy when thine own mother died; and thou must make her know her care hath been gratefully remembered.

Benj. I am sorry thou must go, my brother. I will do as thou hast said. And though thy journey be a long one, I hope thou shalt not find cause for regret in me when we meet again.

Enter **Jacob,** *coming from door.*

Jacob. Well, my sons, thou givest me pleasure to see thee thus together. Joseph, my well beloved, and Benjamin, the son of my old age, thou art to me a comfort in thy mother's stead. May Jehovah bless thee, and make thee men of honor; and some day cause thy family to call thee blessed. Thy mother, Leah, awaits thee, Joseph, to refresh thy spirits and gird thee for thy journey.

Jos. Jehovah bless thee also, my father, and comfort

thee in thy sons. Come, Benjamin, thou too must refresh thyself, for thou shalt accompany me an hour's journey on the way to Shechem.

(*Go into the house.*)

Jacob. (*Looking after them.*) How good hath the Lord been to His servant to give him such sons. Many evils have compassed me about in my lifetime, but Jehovah hath still been gracious unto me. Would that Rebecca might know, in her paradise, that her sons are growing to be men of honor, as plants grown up in their youth.

(*A sound of quarrelling, and a Canaanite comes fleeing to* **Jacob** *for protection, servants of* **Jacob** *pursuing him with clubs and staves.*)

Jacob. Stop! Abinadab, put down thy weapon. Enoch, withhold thy angry speech. What meaneth all this turmoil and disputing?

Abinadab. This dog of a Canaanite will not cease taking water for his cattle from thy well. Seven days now have we forbidden and threatened him; and for all that he hath come again this morning.

Canaanite. I pray thee hear me, Jacob. I am a poor man and have but one creature that supplieth milk and butter for my children. Thou knowest how dry the country hath become, and I have no place to find water for her. I came and besought thy servants to give me a little water, not for myself but for my thirsty creature, that my children might have food; and they became angry and set upon me.

Jacob. What is thy name, and where dwellest thou?

Canaanite. My name is Amelek. I dwell with my family in a tent, just outside the wall of Hebron, and spend my days at labor in the city.

Jacob. Abinadab, hath this stranger spoken truly?

Abinadab. I know nothing of him, my lord, except that he is a Canaanite and doth bring a scrawny creature to pollute the water we draw for our own kine.

Jacob. Shame upon thee, Abinadab; and thou servants of Israel, may Jehovah forgive this thy sin. Thy master was once a servant and a wanderer in the land of Canaan, seeking rest and food; and the Lord saw him, and dealt graciously with him. Amelek, go thou in peace. Thou shalt draw water unmolested when thou wilt; and if thou lackest for thyself or thy children, come thou to the house of Israel, and as the Lord hath blessed me, thy need shall be supplied.

Amelek. I thank thee, my lord Jacob. May thy God bless thee and multiply thy seed in the earth.

Jacob. (*Raising his hand.*) Peace be with thee.

Enter **Joseph** (*prepared for his journey*), **Benjamin** *and* **Leah,** *and all the men and women servants gather to see him off.*

Joseph. (*To* **Zareda.**) Fare thee well, Zareda. Be thou a good girl. See that thy pitcher is always full. May the tongue of Zephorah not disquiet thee, and be thou kind to Benjamin. (*To* **Leah**) Leah, my mother, fare thee well.

Leah. O Joseph, I dread to see thee go. I have sent thee on many an errand, and seen thee take many a journey. But I have strange misgivings. The way thou goest is lonely, and thou art not always among thy friends. Thou wast ever the light of thy mother's eyes as thou hast been of mine, and I cannot see an evil befall thee. Have a care for thyself, Joseph, and hasten thy journey every moment until thou return.

Jos. (*Embracing her.*) Thou art a true mother, Leah, as thou hast ever been; and Jehovah knoweth that I love thee. Thy tender heart doth prompt thy fears, but they

are vain. By sunset I shall be at Kadesh, and in the early morning shall renew my journey. The road is sometimes lonely; but I shall walk in the day, and be on my guard. At noon I will rest beneath the shade, and at night find lodging at some tent or cottage off the beaten way. Best of all the Lord shall be with me, to direct my steps and preserve me from all danger; and I promise thee, my mother, I shall again see thy face in peace. (*To* **Jacob**) Fare thee well, my father. Thou art a man, and hast been on many a lonely road. Surely *thou* hast no fear for me.

Jacob. I fear not for the road thou goest, my son; nor for any harm to thee by strangers. Only be thou discreet among thy brethren; for thou knowest they have been cold toward thee of late. Take them my presents and my message. See how they prosper and bring me early word. One thing I counsel thee, my son. Say thou nought again before them of thy dreams. If the Lord hath spoken to thee by them, keep thou thine own counsel, and he shall bring it to pass. But speak not of it to thy brethren, lest they more dislike thee.

Jos. I will be ever mindful of what thou sayest. And whatever come, know that in his heart thy son doth honor thee. Bless me, my father. (*Kneeling.*)

Jacob. The Lord bless thee, my son; bless thy down-sitting and thine up-rising, thy going out and thy coming in; the Lord preserve thee in all thy wanderings, deliver thee from all evil, and make thee ride upon the high places of the earth. Amen.

(**Joseph** *arises, and he and* **Benjamin** *go out in silence, all looking after them. Just before passing out of sight they turn, and* **Joseph** *waves his hand, and calls back, "Fare thee well."*)

Curtain.

Scene Second. *A field near Dothan.* **Joseph's** *brothers, except* **Reuben** *and* **Simeon (Levi, Judah, Issachar, Dan, Naphtali, Gad** *and* **Asher),** *playing at quoits in front of their tent.* **Naphtali** *is keeping the count. As curtain rises* **Levi** *throws.*

Naphtali. (*Watching quoits fall, and counting.*) Ten. Three. Five. Eight. Well done, my brother. Thine, Judah.

(**Judah** *throws and* **Naphtali** *counts.*) Two. Six. Three. Eight.

Judah. Not so bad, Issachar. We still lead by six.

(**Gad** *throws,* **Naphtali** *counts.*)

Naphtali. Two. Five. Two. Two again. What aileth thee, Issachar? Thou art slow this morning.

Issachar. Canst thou do better?

Naphtali. Better? Though thou shouldst do thy best at any time, I could out-throw thee.

Issachar. What wilt thou wager?

Naph. Six pieces.

Issachar. Darest thou say ten?

Naph. Ten.

Issachar. Done. Judah, hold thou the coin. (*Handing him the pieces.* **Naphtali** *also counts from his wallet and hands to* **Judah,** *taking his place.* **Issachar** *continues:*) Now, my lord Naphtali, thou hast challenged; throw thou first.

Naph. First then, I care not. (*Throws and* **Judah** *counts.*)

Judah. Five. Seven. Nine. Three. (**Issachar** *throws,* **Judah** *counts.*) Eight. Ten. Seven. Eight.

(*General laughter and shouts of* "Bravo! Issachar.")

Judah. Naphtali, thou art fairly beaten. Here is thy money, Issachar. Now let the game go forward.

Enter **Reuben** *and* **Simeon.**

Reuben. Brethren! Yonder on the hillside is a traveler, as though in search of some one. Look thou. It seems like our brother Joseph.

(*All look in direction indicated.*)

Judah. As I live, it is our father's favorite.

Zebulun. Thou sayest rightly, Judah. Seest thou not his coat, Issachar? There is not another like it in all the land of Canaan.

Issachar. I see it now. It is indeed our young dreamer. He hath doubtless had another vision and hath come to tell us again that he will yet lord it over us. Heardest thou his dreams, Naphtali?

Naphtali. I remember not the dreams; but I know they pointed to his becoming something great, and ourselves doing him reverence.

Issachar. Harken, brethren. Let me be Joseph for a moment. I will rehearse these wonderful visions. (*Grandiloquently*) "Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf." (*Laughter and jeers.*) "I have dreamed another dream, and, behold, the sun, moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me." (*More derisive laughter.*) Even our poor deluded father could not listen quietly to such bold effrontery. "What is this dream," saith he, "that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Judah. And yet I verily believe the foolish old man doth partly credit Joseph's high pretensions. His preference for him among us all hath overcome his judgment.

Zebulun. What if it hath? It is our own fault. My

judgment is we should long ago have taken this matter into our own hands, and rid ourselves of his insolence.

Judah. Well said, Zebulun. Canst thou keep a secret?

Zebulun. Yes, if it concerneth this dreamer.

Judah. Well, then, say ye only that our father shall not know it, and I will make way with him, or ever he have a chance to taunt us again with his superiority. Then we shall see what will become of his pretentious dreams.

Zebulun. But how shall we meet our father, if we thus consent? What shall we say to him when Joseph cometh not again?

Asher. I have it, brethren. We will take a kid from the herd and kill it, dip his coat in the blood, and send it to our father, saying, This have we found. Know thou whether it be thy son's coat or no. And he shall say, "It is my son's coat — an evil beast hath devoured him."

All. Good! Away with this dreamer.

Reuben. Thou speakest not well, Judah. For though I hate him as thou dost, he is still our brother. Let not his blood be upon thy hands, nor ours. Rememberest thou the old well yonder in the wilderness, wherein we found no water? Let us cast him into it, cover a stone over the mouth of the pit, and leave him. So, when we meet our father, we shall, in very truth, know nothing of his death.

Judah. Well spoken. I swear to thee, Reuben, thou hast rid me of a most disagreeable duty. Here he comes. Let us make no parley. Or ever he shall speak with us I will seize him. Zebulun and Asher, do ye strip his coat from off him. Reuben and myself will throw him in the pit. Let no man's heart fail him.

Gad. (*Taking a scarf from his waist.*) Whilst thou art stripping him, I will bind this scarf upon his mouth. I cannot endure to hear him cry for pity.

Judah. Sh ——. He cometh.

Enter **Joseph.**

Jos. Hail, my brethren. I have had a long search for thee.

Judah. But thou hast found us at last, my lord Joseph; and we all bow in the dust before thee. (*Bowing low.*)

(*Rushes upon him, holds his hands behind him.* **Gad** *binds the sash across his mouth;* **Zebulun** *and* **Asher** *strip off his coat and* **Judah** *and* **Reuben** *take him out, all following to the end of view-point and then returning to center.*)

Zebulun. No better piece of work hath been done this day. (*Looking up.*) Brethren, the sun is overhead; let us break our fast; we have plucked this thorn from our flesh and can now eat our bread in peace. Asher, Naphtali, bring thou water, and we will have all things ready against Judah's return. Reuben goeth to the hill again to finish out his watch. He will eat there.

(*They spread a cloth upon the ground and bring food from the tent.*)

Enter **Judah,** *hurriedly.*

Judah. Brethren, by a fortunate circumstance, a happy thought hath come to me. As I was returning from the wilderness where we had safely disposed of our dreamer, I saw a company of merchantmen, a caravan with camels laden as if going down to Egypt. Of what profit is it, said I to myself, that we let our brother perish in the pit? These men would gladly purchase him for a slave; for well they know that such a likely lad would bring them good fortune in any Egyptian market. We shall make something by it, and we shall be as well rid of our dreamer and his dreams as if we had ourselves made way with him; yet shall we not in any wise be chargeable with his death.

All. Good on thy head, Judah!

Judah. I beckoned to them, and made them understand I had a matter with them. Two men have left the caravan and are coming to us across the fields. In the meantime I have sent Asher and Naphtali, whom I met going for water, to lift Joseph from the pit and bring him hither.

Enter two Ishmaelites, **Magdiel** *and* **Husham.**

Magdiel. Hail! shepherds; hast thou an errand with us?

Judah. Art thou from the caravan?

Magdiel. Yes. We came from Midian, and are journeying to Egypt, laden with spicery, balm and myrrh. Thou art sprung from Abraham.

Judah. Thou sayest rightly. How knowest thou our ancestry?

Magdiel. Thy speech and thy countenance betrayeth thee. We also are of the seed of Abraham, and so should claim some kinship.

Judah. How sayest thou so?

Magdiel. We are Ishmaelites; descended from thy great progenitor by Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, as thou art by Sarah, Abraham's wife. My name is Magdiel, and this, my kinsman, Husham.

Judah. I am Judah, and these, my brethren, all sons of Israel, third from our common ancestor, Abraham. We make thee most welcome. Wilt thou not eat with us?

Magdiel. Delay us not, I pray thee. The day is failing, and we must be at Shechem by evening. What wouldst thou with us?

Enter **Asher** *and* **Naphtali** *with* **Joseph** *between them.*

Judah. We have here a young man who hath followed us now since the last full moon. He seems to have no kins-

folk nor habitation, but seeks shelter in our tents. He is of no use to us, but only devoureth our bread, which we give to him from pity, though often it is scant even with us. Thou goest to Egypt. Take him with thee, and though thou pay us what is right, thou shall also sell him with large profit to thyself.

Magdiel. By Ishmael's shade, he doth seem a likely lad, if he were cleaned and clad. What dost thou ask for him?

Joseph. I pray thee, hear me, sirs. These men have no right to sell me to thee for any price. They are deceiving thee. I am their brother, Joseph, their own father's son.

(*Shouts of derisive laughter.*)

Judah. Hear him not. His head is turned a little. He hath been so since first he came to us. But he is harmless and evidently hath been gently born.

(*Laughter.*)

Magdiel. We will give ten pieces for him.

Joseph. I tell thee, sirs, they have no right to sell me. My father, Israel, hath twelve sons. Nine of them thou seest here. Reuben, the eldest, watches in the fields; I am Joseph, the eleventh; my brother Benjamin, the youngest, abideth with his father.

(*More derisive laughter.*)

Jos. May God forgive them; they know not what they do.

Judah. Thou seest he is a bright lad, and feigneth well. Thou offerest too little. We must have thirty pieces.

(*It begins to grow lowery and distant thunder is heard.*)

Magdiel. Too much! Why hast thou called us from our company for such a bargain? We could hardly sell

him for thirty pieces, even after taking him so long a journey.

(*Thunder.*)

Judah. Say twenty-four!

Magdiel. (*Impatiently.*) Too high! We may as well take our departure. What sayest thou, Husham?

Husham. Sixteen; and be thou quick to answer, for we must overtake our caravan before yonder storm bursts upon us.

Judah. There are ten of us. We should have two for each, to pay us for the care and trouble we have taken to preserve his skin whole until so good a fortune should befall him. Come, kinsmen, serve us fairly.

(*Thunder, and growing darker.*)

Magdiel. Well, here is thy silver. Bind the fellow, and let us depart quickly.

Joseph. (*Shrinking from* **Judah** *and appealing to the Ishmaelites.*) I pray thee, bind me not. Though they have deceived thee, thou hast bought me fairly, and I will go with thee without restraint. I never yet betrayed my trust nor forfeited my word.

(*Grows dark, and comes on to rain. Thunder and lightning increase.*)

Joseph. Sons of Jacob, the Lord shall hold you to account for what ye have done this day. I came to you with messages of peace, and in your evil hearts ye sought to kill me; but the Lord interfered for me, and turned aside your wicked purpose. Then you threw me in the pit to die of hunger; and there in the darkness, where ye thought I should have sobbed out my life, with none to hear or save, I cried to the God of our fathers, and he heard me. The

angel of Jehovah stood beside me, and cheered me with the promise of deliverance. (*A heavy peal of thunder, at which the brothers wince.*) Well may ye shrink from the voice of Him who speaketh in the thunder. You have betrayed the innocent, and sold for silver your own flesh and blood; and the Lord will require it of you. (*Thunder.*) I have not asked for pity, for well I know that in your stubborn hearts there is no pity for him ye hate. I have passed beyond your power to pity or to harm. My appeal is to the God of Israel, by whose name I swear ye have no cause to hate me. You have thought by this base treachery to thwart the purpose of the Almighty, and bring to nought my dreams. But in the name of the great Jehovah I tell thee thou shalt yet come to him whom this day thou hast cast out, and beg for bread to keep your souls alive. (*Thunder.*) Yea, upon thy bended knees, and with your faces in the dust, shalt thou yet plead for pity to him whom now thou sellest into bondage. Fare thee well!

(*Thunder, lightning and rain, as* **Joseph** *goes out with* **Magdiel** *and* **Husham,** *and curtain falls.*)

(*End of Act I.*)

ACT II.

Scene First. *Room of the captain of the guard, in a fortress in Heliopolis, showing grating door, center, opening into the prison.* **Joseph** *and* **Captain** *discovered as curtain rises.*

Captain. Well, Joseph, all is well, I dare say, with the prisoners this morning?

Joseph. All is well, my lord. The fortress was quiet through the night. There was no attempt at tumult, and all the prisoners seem content, save one.

Capt. Thou answerest as I had expected of thee. "All is well." Joseph, I like thee; I deny it not. A hundred times now have I come and gone, and thou art always here, and always ready with thy answer, "All is well." And so I find it. And *now* I make no doubt thou sayest truly, "All save one." Who is this one whom thou exceptest, when thou sayest "All save one"?

Jos. Malus, the Lybian, in the inner ward.

Capt. Malus? He who made the assault upon me in the court-yard not long since?

Jos. The same, my lord.

Capt. A most pestilent fellow. And no wonder he is ill-content, for news hath come to him that he must hang before the moon again fulls twice. I am sorry for it; but there is no remedy. The man not only is a murderer, but he hath it in his heart to kill again. I have not forgotten, Joseph, that but for thy loyalty and courage my blood should have stained his hands, as the intent to take a life that never did him anything but kindness now stains his heart.

Right glad I am, however, that all save one seem full content; for we are to have distinguished visitors to-day. Potiphera, the great priest and prophet of the Sun, comes down from the temple to make his visit to our fortress, and prince Omrah does the honors for the royal household. (*Trumpet.*) There! they are now passing the guard, and will be with us directly. Keep thou here, Joseph, thou art quite welcome to remain. The good priest always asks to speak with thee, and the prince hath already heard of thy wisdom and thine honorable conduct.

Enter **Potiphera, Omrah** *and* **Asenath,** *preceded and followed by soldiers.*

Officer of the Guard. Captain, the reverend father, Poti-

phera, Priest of On; our illustrious Prince Omrah, and Asenath, the Daughter of the Temple.

Capt. Thrice welcome, Prophet of the Sun. Thy presence here has always proved a benediction. Most noble prince, the fortress is thine own, and thou art always welcome. Daughter of the Temple, thou doest us great honor to bring the sunlight of thy presence to so dark a habitation. It is not often that so gentle a visitor doth gladden the eyes of our men of war and cheer the heart of the prisoner.

Asenath. I thank thee, Captain.

Potiphera. Thou art a good son, Captain, and may Ra bless thee. And thou hast still here thy trusted monitor. Joseph, again I greet thee, and hope thou art in good health and spirits.

Jos. I am well, my lord, and most glad I am to share thy greeting. I worship not thy gods, but from my heart I honor *thee.*

Potiphera. So thou art still the servant of Jehovah, and must have me know thou doest reverence to *me* and not my gods. Come, come, explain no more; I will not misunderstand thee. If the worship of Jehovah makes men such as thou, I would that we had in Egypt more to worship him. Captain, is there a Lybian here, condemned to die?

Capt. There is, my father, and he is very sullen.

Pot. By your leave, I would speak with him, and Prince Omrah will pass the gate with me.

Capt. Most willingly. Officer of the Guard, wait thou without and be at ease until I call for thee.

(*Officer takes his guard outside.*)

Pot. Abide thou here, my daughter; the Prince and I must needs go through the prison, and to scenes thou wilt

not care to witness. Joseph, my daughter, Asenath. She will abide with thee till I return.

Jos. Thou doest me great honor. Sit thou, my lady.

(**Asenath** *is seated. Captain of the guard opens the gate, and the three pass out into the prison, leaving* **Joseph** *and* **Asenath** *alone.*)

Asenath. Sit thou, Joseph, I would speak with thee!

Jos. Knowest thou that I am a prisoner, my lady?

As. Yes. I know that thou art a prisoner; and I also know thou shouldst not be.

Jos. How knowest thou, my lady?

As. My father hath told me of thee. He believes thee an honest man, and falsely accused; and thy former master, Potipher, my father's cousin, hath confessed that in his heart he holds thee guiltless of offence, else would thy punishment have been far greater.

Jos. Thy father is generous and kind; and thou art generous and kind, my lady, that thou believest him.

As. Thou surely dost not deny that his good opinion of thee is well deserved.

Jos. Daughter of the Temple, I have a God, infinite and eternal, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, before whom none can dissemble, and before whose bar of judgment all must some day come. I have no means to prove my innocence; but by this infinite Jehovah, whom my fathers worship, I swear to thee, my lady Asenath, that I am guiltless of anything in thought or word or deed that should have brought me to this prison.

As. Joseph, I pray thee protest no more. Before thou didst protest thy innocence, I told thee thou shouldst not have been a prisoner. But had I not, I should believe thee now.

Jos. I thank thee, lady Asenath. Thou hast somewhat to say to me?

As. My father hath told me of thy curious faith — curious it seemed to him. And ever since he told me I have had a great desire to hear it from thy lips. My father worships at the shrine of the great Ra, the Spirit of the Sun. From my earliest years I have been a child of the Temple, and so sincere has been my worship, that my father's people call me "Daughter of the Sun." But often in my devotions, when my heart was pouring itself out before the altar, I have caught a vision of a greater God than Ra — one higher and more potent than the sun; and yet, withal, so like ourselves, and easy of approach, that I have almost forgotten for the time that Ra was the great lord and patron of the temple, and have turned to worship at the feet of Him whose presence seemed to fill my soul with mingled awe and adoration. Thou art a Hebrew, Joseph?

Jos. Yes, my lady.

As. And is this Jehovah of whom thou speakest the God of thy native country and thy father's people, as Ra is of mine?

Jos. He is the God of my fathers and of my people; but we have no country, as thou hast. Our country is yet to be; but wheresoe'er we go, in all the earth, he follows and protects us.

As. Hath thy God no temple, Joseph, and no priest to serve him?

Jos. Jehovah dwelleth not in temples made with hands, my lady Asenath. He hath set his glory far above the heavens, and his presence filleth the whole earth. All things were made by him. The very sun thy fathers worship is but a part of his beneficent creation — the medium by which he giveth light and warmth to nature, even as the out-shining of his Spirit maketh wise the human mind,

filleth the soul of man with all pleasant things, and giveth strength to will and do his pleasure.

As. But tell me, Joseph, hast thou seen Jehovah? Or have thy fathers seen him?

Jos. No man can see his face and live; or, I had better said, no living man can see his face; but the Angel of His Presence hath often appeared to my fathers, making known to them Jehovah's will.

As. My father hath told me thou camest from a far country, and not of thine own choice.

Jos. Thou sayest right, my lady.

As. Whence camest thou, Joseph? and where are thy people?

Jos. I have told thee, lady Asenath, that as yet we have no country; but a promised land. My father's people came from Chaldea, beyond the great river, at the call of Jehovah. They dwell in Canaan, which the Lord hath promised they shall some day hold in full possession.

As. And doth thy father live?

Jos. God knoweth, my lady. I came away when hardly yet a man; and such hath been my fortune among thy people, that I could not go to seek my father, nor hath any tidings of my people come to me.

As. I hope my questioning doth not trouble thee, Joseph. I ask not from idle curiosity. Thy honest speech hath made me bold to talk with thee, and my desire to learn about thy God hath led me also to seek a knowledge of thy people. Wouldst thou care to tell me thy father's name?

Jos. I like thy questioning, my lady. I should be a poor servant of Jehovah if I did not gladly satisfy thy desire for knowledge of him; and I should be unworthy of my fathers if I were ashamed to tell thee of them. My father's father called him Jacob, but once, in an hour of

great trial, the angel of Jehovah met him on a journey and changed his name to Israel, which in the language of my people, means a Prince of God. A prince of God, then, my father liveth if he live; or, if he doth no longer live on earth, a prince of God he liveth still in paradise.

As. But tell me, Joseph, doth Jehovah hear thee when thou prayest to him in a strange land; and shalt thou not return to inherit in the country he hath promised to thy people?

Jos. No land is strange to Jehovah, my lady Asenath; and no one who prayeth to Him can really be a stranger in any land. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Some day, I doubt not, the Lord shall deliver me from this prison and give me what is mine.

As. Thou speakest like a true son of thy God, — frankly and brave. But tell me again, Joseph, for thou hast said that he is Lord of all countries, could a daughter of the temple find favor with Jehovah?

Jos. Yes, my lady.

As. Then surely he will hear thee, Joseph, if thou sayest ought to him for me. Wilt thou not ask him to give me a place among those who serve him?

Jos. And if he hear me, wilt thou confess and serve him without fear or shame? I *know* thou wilt, my lady.

(**Joseph** *raises his hand and* **Asenath** *sinks upon her knees.*)

O, God of Israel, thou who hast in every land them that seek thee with a pure desire, open thou the understanding of this thy daughter, that she may behold thee more perfectly, and vouchsafe to her a place among the people thou hast chosen; and may she and all her father's people know that thou art God of all Gods, and that Jehovah keepeth trust with them that fear him, until thou fill the whole earth with thy glory. Amen.

As. (*Rising.*) I thank thee, Joseph.

(*Sound of marching, and return of party through the gate, bringing the chief butler and chief baker with them.*)

Potiphera. (*To captain of the guard.*) I am sorry to leave him thus; sullen and impenitent. But it is his own fault, and he alone must bear it. The hour is already late, and the offerings are waiting at the temple. Goest thou, also, Prince?

Prince. I will accompany thee outside the fortress. The guard, if thou wilt, Captain.

(*Captain gives signal, and guard comes in when* **Omrah** *has said,* "Permit me, Daughter of the Temple.")

Pot. Pardon, my daughter, I have kept thee long.

As. Say not, "my pardon," father. It hath not seemed long to wait, and thou but didst thy duty to the prisoners.

Pot. So? Thou hast not found it long? Thou speakest always like the sweet daughter that thou art. Sayest not so, Prince Omrah?

Prince. It is more fitting that *thou* sayest it, good father; but since thou askest me, I will confess thou speakest as I think. Permit me, Daughter of the Temple. (*Kissing her hand.*)

Pot. Fare thee well, Joseph; I thank thee for my daughter's keeping.

Jos. Fare thee well, good priest. Thy daughter hath not burdened me, I do assure thee. The Lord be with thee, and with my lady Asenath.

Asenath. And with thee, Joseph.

Prince. (*To captain.*) Comest thou not with us, captain?

Capt. If thou wilt tarry but a moment, Prince, I shall do myself the honor to see thee safely past the outer gate.

(*To Joseph.*) Joseph, I leave with thee these two men, who have each a matter of which they would speak with thee. They have pledged their honor to return to proper custody when they have finished with thee. I go for a little while, and thou art left in charge. Fare thee well.

(*Ex. party, leaving* **Joseph** *with chief butler and chief baker.*)

Jos. (*To butler and baker.*) A noble man, the good priest of On. I would he were a follower of Jehovah. Sarnak, thou hast a matter of which thou wouldst speak to me. And thou, too, Hophnes, thou lookest sad. I hope there hath no ill report come to thee.

Hophnes. (*The butler.*) Joseph, we have both come on the same errand. As thou knowest, we have both served the king; Sarnak, as chief of his bakers; I, his chief butler; but taking offence at what he thought misconduct, and being wroth with us, he put us in ward in this prison. Last night we each dreamed a dream. Our dreams seem to us to have a meaning, some portent of good or ill, but we have found no one who can interpret them. Thou hast repute for wisdom, and we have come to thee.

Jos. Interpretations belong to God, Hophnes; tell me thy dream.

Hoph. In my dream, behold! a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

Jos. The dream is good. The three branches are three days: within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee to thy place: and thou shalt deliver the

cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

Hoph. Thou explainest well, Joseph. I hope it may be as thou sayest.

Jos. Saidst I not that the interpretation is of God? I speak not mine own wisdom.

Hoph. (*Taking* **Joseph's** *hand.*) Joseph, may thy God bless thee. Thou heardst the captain say I had pledged mine honor to return to proper custody. I go now to redeem my pledge. A thousand times I thank thee. Fare thee well.

(*Turns to go back to the inner prison.*)

Jos. (*Calling after him.*) Hophnes!

Hoph. (*Turning.*) Yes, Joseph.

Jos. Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this prison.

Hoph. Most gladly do I promise thee. Fare thee well.

Jos. Sarnak, thou also art disquieted. Let me hear *thy* dream.

Sarnak. I also was in *my* dream, and behold I had three white baskets on my head; and in the upper basket there was all manner of bake-meats for Pharaoh, and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

Jos. (*After a little thought.*) Wilt thou know what thy dream doth signify?

Sarnak. Hoping thy wisdom might divine its meaning, I have come to thee.

Jos. Not my wisdom, Sarnak. Interpretations are of God. And unless this were of God, I would not tell it thee; for it bodes thee ill.

Sarnak. Tell it me, Joseph.

Jos. The three baskets thou carriedst on thy head are three days; yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

Sarnak. Say not so, Joseph. Canst thou find no other meaning?

Jos. God hath told thee the meaning of thy dream. It is not in man to give thee any other.

Sarnak. Then thou must save me, Joseph.

Jos. *Thou* shouldst have saved *thyself* from thy evil deeds, which have brought this judgment upon thee. Yet even now most gladly would I help thee if I could.

Sarnak. Thou art master here.

Jos. At this moment, yes, until the Captain returns.

Sarnak. Open thou the door for me, Joseph. I will array myself in yonder garment and I make no doubt I shall pass the guards in safety. Come, Joseph, thou hast pity for me.

Jos. Thou *sayest* that I am sorry for thee. I have *pity*, but I also have *honor*. I have never yet betrayed my trust, and I cannot do it now. Keep thy pledge with the captain, Sarnak. Go back to thy place, repent thee heartily of thy faults, and though thou diest, thou shalt not die unforgiven.

Sarnak. (*Angrily.*) *Joseph!* I ask not thy advice. Thou hast the keys that open yonder doors. If thou art fearful to befriend a fellow prisoner I will demand it of thee. Give them to me instantly or I will take thy life.

Jos. Life or death thou shalt not have them.

Sarnak. Then die! (*Striking* **Joseph** *upon the head with a sand-bag drawn from his bosom.* **Joseph** *clutches* **Sarnak** *to save himself in falling and blows his whistle. Guards rush in, seize* **Sarnak.** *Prisoners crowd around the grating. Captain of the guard rushes in.*)

Capt. Officer of the guard, what is this uproar?

Officer. This prisoner hath committed murder and was trying to escape.

Capt. Take him to the dungeon. (*As they take him out, he cries, Oh, my God! what have I done?*)

Capt. (*Raises* **Joseph,** *who is in a swoon, but recovers.*) Joseph, Joseph, tell me, dost thou live?

Jos. (*Wildly.*) Help! help! the guard! Why do they not come. I tell thee, Sarnak, though thou kill me, thou shalt not have the keys.

Capt. Joseph! It is not Sarnak that holdest thee. It is thy friend, the captain. The guard *hath* come, Joseph. Sarnak, the chief butler, is safe in the dungeon, and all is well.

(**Joseph,** *coming to himself, looks at the captain, recognizes him, throws his arms about his neck.*)

Jos. Captain! Is the prison safe?

Capt. Yes, Joseph. It is safe, and thou art again among thy friends.

Jos. (*Raising his hand.*) The Lord be praised!

Curtain.

Scene Second. *Room in Pharaoh's Palace.* **Princess Ardah** *lying on a sofa, a slave moving large feather fan. Attendant arranging lotus blossoms on the table.*

Ardah. Are they not beautiful, Nedra? They are fresh from the lake of Menzaleh, beyond the temple of the Sun. They came by the runner who bore the message to Asenath, the Daughter of the Temple.

Nedra. They are sweet and beautiful, my princess; and of such delightful odor, — hast thou noticed it?

Ardah. Yes, Nedra. It is indeed delightful. (*To slave.*) Menelek, thou mayest retire; the air is comfortable, and I do believe the motion of thy fan doth keep from me the fragrance of the lotus.

Exit slave.

Nedra. Dost like my arrangement, princess?

Ardah. Yes, Nedra. Thou hast much skill and sense of beauty. (*Bell rings.*) See thou the cause of that alarm.

(**Nedra** *goes to door, and returns.*)

Nedra. It is Lady Asenath, my princess, the Daughter of the Temple.

Ardah. Asenath? Hath she already come? I would be alone with her, Nedra; go thou, bid her come to me at once.

Enter **Asenath.**

Ardah. (*Rising, and embracing her.*) Oh, Asenath, I am so glad to see thee. How art thou here so soon?

As. I had been with my father to the fortress and was just returning when the runner overtook us with thy message, and my father bade me come at once. Art thou well, my princess?

Ardah. Say no more, "My princess," Asenath. We have been friends since childhood, and together grown to women. Thou hast always been to me sister, and so thou must continue. "Ardah" is enough. To thee I must be no more a princess.

As. I thank thee, Ardah.

Ardah. Sit thee, dear Asenath. I have a most important matter to talk with thee. It concerneth my brother, Prince Omrah. Knowest thou that thou art loved of him, my sister?

As. Thy brother hath been always kind to me.

Ardah. Asenath, Prince Omrah loves thee. And his love for thee hath troubled him of late, because thou seemest not to know the signs by which he would make thee aware of it. Thou seemest absent from thyself, and unresponsive. I have long known his love for thee, and have hoped that thou shouldst sometime be indeed my sister. Tell me, Asenath, dost thou not return the feeling my brother hath for thee?

As. I cannot be too grateful for all the kind attention the prince hath shown to me. But if thou speakest of more than truest friendship, it cannot be that thy brother thinketh it of me; or, if it could be, Ardah, I have it not to give.

Ardah. Asenath, thou camest just now from the fortress?

As. Yes, Ardah.

Ardah. My brother hath spoken of a Hebrew prisoner there, charged by his master with a heinous crime, yet withal so perfect a dissembler that all the prison waits upon him.

As. Thou meanest Joseph?

Ardah. How well thou knowest his name, my sister. Nay, nay, look not so serious. I did but jest. My brother hath told me of thy visit to the fortress; and because his passion for thee hath not met with such response as he could wish, imagines that this prisoner hath found favor in thine eyes. But when he mentioned it, I laughed him to scorn. As if my sister, the Daughter of the Temple, could so far forget her station, or be guilty of such indiscretion!

As. Hast thou seen him?

Ardah. This Joseph?

As. Yes, Ardah. Hast thou seen him?

Ardah. No. I have no desire to cultivate the friendship of a criminal, and I fear if I should see him, I should fall in love with him — as everybody does, I hear. (*Laughing.*)

As. Joseph is not a criminal, Ardah. He hath been falsely charged.

Ardah. So? Thou dost astonish me, my sister. Thou makest me almost believe thou *hast* fallen under the spell of this Canaanitish marvel.

As. He of whom thou speakest is not a Canaanite. He is a Hebrew, of most excellent family, delivered by treachery into bondage, and again by treachery made a prisoner. He hath cast no spell upon me, save that of truth and goodness.

Ardah. Thou forcest me to think thou carest for this Hebrew more than thou dost acknowledge even to thyself. Can it be my brother hath divined thy secret? Asenath, come to thyself. The course thou takest will disgrace thy father's house; and all the friends thou lovest will turn their backs upon thee. Cut short thy visits to the fortress and forget this prisoner. Be once more the laughing girl thou hast been, and let my brother see thou hast not lost both head and heart.

As. I have called thee my sister, princess, because thou badest me; and no heart should know better than thine own how well I love thee. But if thou makest me to feel that I must choose between my duty and my friends, then I must find my friendships among those to whom, by reason of their harder lot, my duty calls me. (*Draws away.*)

Ardah. (*Caressingly.*) . Nay, nay, my sister. I have hurt thee. I was too quick to charge thee with folly. I will believe no more of it; only listen to me, sister, and let not thy good be evil spoken of. This is to be an eventful day in the palace. My father hath been troubled with a

dream he cannot understand. He hath told it to the wise men of the kingdom, and to-day he holds court that they may unfold to him its meaning. Thou must stay and hear them.

Enter **Omrah** *during* **Ardah's** *speech.*

Omrah. Good-morning, my sister. I hope my presence here doth not intrude. Asenath, thy pardon. I hope thou comest well. (*Takes her hand and kisses it.*)

As. Quite well, Prince Omrah.

Ardah. (*To* **Omrah.**) Thou dost not intrude, my brother. Thou hast heard me tell Asenath that she must remain to grace our father's court. And now that thou hast come, I will leave her with thee for a little, for there are matters to which I should attend. Come thou to my apartment when thou wilt, my sister.

Omrah. I shall gladly do my best to fill thy place, my sister. Fare thee well. (*Leads her to exit and returns to* **Asenath.**) Sit thou, Asenath. The opportunity hath come which I have long desired; that I might find thee alone and tell thee all that is in my heart. We have together played in childhood, Asenath, and have grown up together, and have been the best of friends. It hath lately come to me that we are no longer children. I am Prince Omrah, and thou art Lady Asenath, the Daughter of the Temple. I have always loved thee, Asenath, and have always, through childhood and through youth, looked forward to the time, when, having come of age, I should be permitted to frankly tell thee of my passion and take thee for my wife. Thou must have known I loved thee, Asenath, for I have gone in and out with thee and never had an eye for other than thyself. Say to me, Asenath, that thou returnest my love, that thou wilt be my wife, and thou shalt make me happier than all my father's kingdom.

As. Prince Omrah, as thou sayest, we have ever been the truest friends, and thou doest me great honor that thou thinkest of me thus. I would be thy friend, and do all I could to make thee happy. But thou askest of me what I have not to give.

Omrah. Thou sayest not, Asenath, that thou lovest another better?

As. I only say to thee, my prince, I cannot be thy wife.

Omrah. Thou sayest both in one. Tell me, Asenath, hast thou not become infatuated with the Hebrew prisoner at the fortress?

As. I honor him, Prince Omrah, as a most noble man.

Omrah. Thou doest more. As I have long suspected, since thou hast visited the fortress thou hast also fallen a prey to this artful Hebrew. Think what thou art doing, Asenath. The prince of Egypt layeth at thy feet the inheritance to Pharaoh's kingdom — wealth, honor, everything that could bring thee happiness — and thou art throwing it all away to give thy confidence to an alien, a slave, who loveth not thy people, and serveth not thy gods, and whose crime hath brought him to the fortress where the enemies of thy father's people come. And though thou feignest to believe him innocent, I tell thee, Asenath, that but for his inimitable hypocrisy, his oily speech, and bold effrontery, he should long ago have paid the penalty of his crimes upon the gallows. O, say to me, Asenath, thou wilt break this spell this prisoner hath woven about thee, and, coming to thyself, come also to thine own.

As. Thou doest Joseph wrong, Prince Omrah, though thou meanest it not. He hateth not our people, by whom he hath been most grievously wronged and robbed of his freedom; and though he serveth not thy father's gods, and thine, he hath a God whom he worshipeth with all his soul

and serveth with all his strength, and in whom he trusteth for his final vindication.

Omrah. (*Roughly.*) Hath he a kingdom to lay at thy feet?

As. He hath the promise of a kingdom. But knowest thou not, Prince Omrah, that kingdoms have not wealth to buy, nor power to command that moving of a heart without which the marriage thou seekest would be a hollow mockery? Pardon me, if I have hurt thee, Omrah. I only meant to be frank with thee.

Omrah. (*Pushing her away.*) I want not thy pity, Asenath. I came to ask thy heart, and in return to offer thee a kingdom. Fool that I am, I have confessed to thee my passion, and thou hast mocked me with thy plea for an imprisoned villain. For the love thou bearest a Canaanitish slave, a felon, who by his mask of gentleness hath robbed the gallows of its due, thou hast spurned the offer of the Prince of Egypt. Go thou, if thou wilt, and make thy bed with crime; but spare thy *pity* for thy ill-found lover.

As. Fare thee well, Prince Omrah.

(*Trumpets.*)

Omrah. (*Following and grasping her.*) Stay, Asenath. thou *shalt* not leave me thus. Though the whole court assemble, I will hold thee 'till thou promise to become my wife. O Asenath, my soul is burning with the passion that I have for thee, and it makes me as a hungry lion that hath lost his prey. Speak to me, Asenath, before thou goest, and tell me thou wert not in earnest when thou saidst another had thy love.

As. Let me go, Prince Omrah; and when thou comest to thy reason thou shalt find the Daughter of the Temple still to be thy friend. (*Exit* **Asenath.**)

Omrah. (*Alone.*) Thus is the son of Pharaoh mocked. And yet, Prince Omrah, thou deservest so to be. Instead of finding means to crush this serpent that creepeth about the walls of yonder fortress, thou hast permitted him to live until he hath stung thee in thy soul. But take thou heart. It is not yet too late. My Lady Asenath, the son of Pharaoh shall have thee yet. There standeth only one 'twixt thee and me, and I will crush this Hebrew slave, though every prisoner in the fortress should die with him.

(*Trumpets, followed by the entrance of a herald.*)

Herald. Prince Omrah, the court is ready to assemble, and thy father calleth for thee.

Omrah. Tell him I come at once. Let the court assemble. (*Goes out.*)

(*At this point may be introduced a company of dancing girls, with tambourines, wearing bracelets, anklets, ear-rings and jewels. The dance may be continued as long as desired. Then trumpets, and the court assembles. Enter trumpeters, followed by soldiers. The courtiers troop in, attention being paid to the grouping of costumes. The wise men enter and stand at the front. Then enter* **Ardah** *and* **Asenath,** *with maids of honor,* **Omrah** *and* **Potiphera.** *Then trumpets, soldiers of the Royal Guard, and the King enters, borne in a canopy chair and followed by slaves with large fans. The chief butler, bearing the King's cup, and soldiers, bring up the rear. As the King enters all cry, "The King," and fall upon one knee. The King ascends the throne, the butler takes his place on the left of the throne. As the King sits, he stretches out his sceptre and all stand.*)

King. Wise men of Egypt, three days ago thou heardest the dreams which seemed to Pharaoh the gods had given him to warn the King of impending danger, or save our beloved Egypt from impending ill. I charged thee

then to give thy best attention to these dreams, to seek unto our gods; and if in any way thou couldst divine their meaning thou shouldst have wealth and honor. What is thine answer?

Balzek. (*Bowing low.*) O *King*, live forever. We have meditated much upon thy dreams; have entreated our gods for wisdom; employed all our charms and incantations, but no answer have we obtained. The man lives not who can deduce a meaning from such dreams. Trouble thyself no more, O King. They are but phantasies of a tired mind. Let the King have rest.

King. Thy answer giveth me no peace. Can it be that of all the wise men of my realm, thou, who art held in greatest repute for wisdom, hast no help to give? What sayest thou, Monetho?

Monetho. (*Bowing low.*) Balzek hath spoken all the truth, O King. No man that lives can make more of thy dreams.

King. Speak thou Thothmes. Surely thou hast some better word for Pharaoh. Give thou the meaning, and thou shalt have wealth and honor commensurate with thy wisdom.

Thothmes. Though thou shouldst offer him thy kingdom, Pharaoh, the man lives not who could make reasonable interpretation of thy dreams. They are but fancies. Let the King forget them, and let them trouble him no more.

Butler. May I have a word with thee, O King?

King. What wouldst thou say, Hophnes? Doth it concern the interpretation of my dreams?

Butler. It doth, O King.

King. Speak thou then, and speak quickly.

Butler. I do remember my fault this day. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the Captain

of the Guard's house; both me and the chief baker. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; and there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the Captain of the Guard; and we told him, and he interpreted our dreams; to each man according to his dream did he interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us so it was; me he restored into mine office, and him he hanged. If he were here, I know he would tell the King also what his dreams foretoken.

King. Captain of the Guard, hast thou such a man in the fortress?

Captain. He speaketh of Joseph, the Hebrew — a servant of Jehovah.

King. Let him be brought to me without delay.

Captain. Officer of the Guard, go thou to the fortress. See that all is well, and say to Joseph that the King calls for him immediately.

(*Exit officer with guard.*)

Balzek. Thou sendest but in vain, O King. If all the magicians and wise men of thy kingdom cannot make thee satisfactory answer, thou hast nought to hope from one who hath not been instructed in the practice of our arts. Sayest thou not so, Monetho?

Monetho. Thou sayest well.

Balzek. And thou, Thothmes?

Thothmes. Thou hast wisely counselled.

Omrah. (*Stepping forward.*) I pray thee, listen to thy wise men, O King, my father. I know this Joseph. He is a Canaanitish slave; a common criminal, who hath just enough wit to save him from the gallows. He serveth not thy gods, and keepeth not the customs of thy people.

King. (*To Hophnes.*) Saidst thou not, Hophnes, that this Joseph telleth dreams?

Hoph. Thou heardst aright, O King.

King. The King hath dreamed, and his dream hath troubled him; he hath called the wise men and magicians, and asked them what it meaneth, and they only answer, "No man can tell thee." I will hear this Joseph, of whom my butler saith he maketh better answer.

Enter officer of the guard with **Joseph.**

Officer of the Guard. Thy order hath been obeyed, King. Joseph, the Hebrew.

King. Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it; and I have heard say of thee that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it.

Joseph. It is not in me, O King; God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

King. Hear thou, then. In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed and well-favored; and they fed in a meadow; and, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favored and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in the land of Egypt for badness, and the lean and ill-favored kine did eat up the first seven fat kine; and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill-favored as at the beginning. So I awoke. I slept and dreamed again, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good; and, behold, seven ears, thin, withered, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them; and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears; and I told this to the magicians and there was none that could declare it to me.

Jos. The dream of Pharaoh is one: and God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good

kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dream is one. The seven thin and ill-favored kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears, blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine. What God is about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh.

Behold there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt; and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine shall consume the land. And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of the famine, for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is settled, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

King. Servant of Jehovah, thou hast spoken well. The mind of Pharaoh is once more at ease. And since thou hast had the wisdom to make known the import of my dream, I ask thee one more question. How counselest thou the King concerning the matter which thy God hath showed him?

Jos. Let Pharaoh look out a man, discreet and wise, to set over all the land of Egypt; and let him appoint officers over all the land, to gather in the seven years of plenty a fifth part of all their produce, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, against the seven years of famine which shall be in all the land of Egypt, that the land perish not. Thus shall the King preserve his land, and his people shall bless him.

King. The thing is good. Men of Egypt, whom think ye most fit to be appointed for this business?

All. Joseph.

King. It is well. Joseph, (*rising, and descending toward* **Joseph** *from the throne*), for as much as God hath shewed

thee all this, there is none in all the kingdom so discreet as thou. Wilt thou take this work upon thee?

Jos. As the Lord shall help me, O King, I will gladly serve thee and thy people.

King. 'Tis done. Thou shalt be over all mine house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou. (*Taking off his ring, and putting it on* **Joseph's** *hand.*) See. I give thee my signet ring, and this shall witness thine authority. I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. Captain of the Guard, take thou Joseph, and properly array him. (*Taking his gold chain from his neck, and handing it to the captain.*) Put this chain of gold about his neck, and make him ride in the second chariot, and cause every man to bow the knee before him, even as he doth before the King. Men of Egypt, salute your Lord Chancellor!

(*All cry, "Long live the Chancellor of Egypt!" and fall upon one knee. Curtain falls as* **Joseph** *goes out with Captain of the Guard.*)

ACT III.

Scene First. *A garden path outside the city, near the Nile. The river, pyramids and Sphinx in the distance.* **Joseph** *and the chief steward discovered as just having met.*

Steward. (*Saluting.*) It hath been done as thou didst command, my lord.

Joseph. Didst thou cause every man's money to be put in the mouth of his sack?

Steward. It was so done, my lord.

Joseph. And my silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest?

Steward. Yes, my lord.

Joseph. It is well. How long since they departed?

Steward. They went as soon as it was light, my lord, and a happy company they were, I do assure thee.

Joseph. Then by this time they must be well on their journey.

Steward. The animals they had were small, and they were heavily laden; they would not travel rapidly, but by this, the third hour, must be as far as Goshen.

Joseph. Cadmus, take thou a band of men from the fortress, well mounted, and haste thou after these men from Canaan. When they are overtaken, cause their baggage to be searched, from the eldest to the youngest, in the name of the King. When thou findest my cup in the sack of the youngest brother, say thou to them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this the cup in which my lord drinketh, and whereby, indeed, he divineth? Make as though thou didst believe they had stolen both the money and the cup, and bring them back to my apartments. I go to meet the Priest of On at yonder pyramid, and thou mayest return before me. If so, await thou there with these men of Canaan until I return.

Steward. Thy word shall be obeyed, my lord.

(*Steward salutes and retires.* **Joseph,** *turning in the opposite direction, meets the princess,* **Ardah,** *unattended. Stops in surprise.*)

Joseph. Ardah! I wish thee good-morning, my princess. Thou camest so quietly I knew not of thy presence in the garden. (*Kisses her hand.*) What unusual event hath come to pass that I have the pleasure of meeting thee thus, so early in the morning, and unattended?

Ardah. I knew of thy coming hither, and came that I might speak with thee alone. And now that I have found thee so, I will not delay a moment to make known my errand, even though thou think me rash. The truth is, I love thee, Joseph. Ever since I saw thee stand before my father, in all the pride of thy wisdom and strength, I have had but one desire, that thou shouldst know my love for thee, and that thou shouldst return it.

Joseph. Thou art most kind, my princess, to have such thoughts of me; and even now thou flatterest me with thy confidence. But I fear thou hast let thy fancy have its way too much for thy better judgment.

Ardah. I know what I am saying, Joseph. I am no child, that I should not discern the nature of this feeling that I have for thee. Tell me, Joseph, hath Pharaoh's daughter not found favor in thine eyes?

Joseph. Thou art a gracious princess, and all of Pharaoh's household are held most dear to me, whom thy father hath so much honored. But I fear I cannot be to thee such as thy words imply.

Ardah. Listen, Joseph. Thou art King of Egypt in everything but name. The people love thee, and gladly yield to thine authority. I am Pharaoh's daughter. If thou canst return the love I have for thee, and take me for thy wife, no power on earth can keep from thee my father's kingdom. Thou shalt sit on the throne of the Pharaoh's, and none shall dispute thy title; and if it please the gods to give thee sons, they shall reign after thee. O, come, Joseph. Seest thou not that in my heart I have sacrificed all my father's house for thee?

Jos. Ardah, thou knowest not what thou sayest. I am not of thy people, and serve not thy gods. Thy father hath been gracious to me, and I have gladly served him. But I have not coveted his kingdom; and such treachery as thou

proposest is most distasteful to me. I must tell thee truly, my princess, were thy father's kingdom thine to give me, and I must take it under pretense that I love thee as he ought to love thee who would share thy fortune, I could not take it. Fare thee well.

(*Goes out,* **Ardah** *looking after him with mingled feelings of anger and desire. Curtain.*)

Scene Second. *King's chamber in the Great Pyramid. Entrance a low, narrow opening one has to stoop to enter. Near one side an altar with a flame burning upon it. Near the other side a stone seat. Three burning tapers give somewhat dim light.* **Prince Omrah** *secreted behind a projecting stone. Enter* **Joseph.**)

Joseph. The good priest, Potiphera, is late this morning. Some matter hath doubtless detained him. The flame is on the altar and only waits his incense. What a pity that so faithful and good a man should follow such superstitions. However, my errand hath not to do with heathen gods or souls of departed kings. I seek for his good offices with the living, and his incense as the promise of a woman's love. I will await him.

Omrah. (*Stepping out of concealment.*) Joseph.

Joseph. (*Turning quickly.*) Prince Omrah! Thou didst startle me. I did not look to meet thee in this place. I wait the priest of On. Hast thou seen him this morning?

Omrah. Yes. There hath been trouble at the fortress which needed his attention. He will be here directly. Joseph, I knew of his coming here, and of thy appointment. I have preceded him, because I have a matter of which I would speak with thee.

Jos. Say on, Prince Omrah. I hope it is a matter in which I may serve thee.

Omrah. I will be direct. It concerneth the Daughter of the Temple. She and myself have grown up together from childhood, and as I grew to be a man, I have always intended, by her leave, to make her my wife. She always seemed pleased with my attentions, and I believe, returned the love I bore her, until the day I left her alone with thee in the fortress. From that very hour she hath been different toward me.

Jos. And thou thinkest I am the cause of this?

Omrah. Thou hast said it. Though doubtless thou hast not intended it, thou hast come between her and myself. She should know that thou who differest from her in lineage and religion could never gain consent of Pharaoh or the Priest of On, even should thou desire to entertain her love.

Jos. Hast thou spoken of this to Asenath?

Omrah. I have.

Jos. And what answer doth she make?

Omrah. She doth not confess her love for thee; she only holds aloof, and leaves me to suspect the cause.

Jos. What wouldst thou have me do, Prince Omrah?

Omrah. If thou wouldst tell her plainly there can never be ought but friendship between her and thee, and break this secret fascination, thou shouldst at once undo the mischief.

Jos. I will do better. I will tell her frankly what thou hast told me, and will set before her what she loseth in letting go thy love.

Omrah. And wilt thou make her understand thou hast no hope or expectation of her.

Jos. That I cannot promise thee. It is but honest, when great matters are brought forward for decision, that the judge should know the truth. The truth is, Prince Omrah, If I knew that Asenath loved me as thou feelest sure that

but for me she would love thyself, I would sue for her at the throne of Pharaoh and before the altar of the Priest of On. Let all be fairly told her. Let herself decide between us, and if she be thine, there is not a subject of thy father's that shall congratulate thee more heartily.

Omrah. The truth is told, and my suspicions are confirmed. Since thou camest into Egypt thou hast been my evil genius. It is not enough that thou hast taken my place upon the throne and stolen the hearts of all my father's people, but thou must take the only thing which I had yet hoped to call my own. Before thou camest from the prison I suspected this strange fascination, and I vowed it should be broken though every prisoner in Egypt exchanged his dungeon for the gallows. Now I know mine enemy and have him in my power, and he shall not escape.

(*Draws dagger and rushes upon* **Joseph,** *who seizes his right arm, struggles with him, wrenches away his dagger, throws it upon the floor, and forces him back against the wall of the chamber, holding him by the throat.*)

Joseph. Feelest thou my grasp, Prince Omrah? Thy very life is in my keeping. Abandon thy purpose before thou forcest me to do greater violence to my benefactor's son. Say that thou repentest of thy purpose. Speak and thou art free.

Omrah. (*Limp and choking.*) Have mercy, Joseph.

Joseph. Thou needst not ask for mercy. I feel no anger, but even a worm will turn upon thee when thou dost attempt its life. Here (*picking up the dagger and handing it to him*), take thy steel; I fear thee not. Call back thy reason to its throne, and seek not to thwart the will of heaven by human violence.

Omrah. (*Putting up his dagger, and his hand to his forehead, looking dazed and humbled.*) Prince of Egypt, thou hast been once more a fool; and I suppose all Egypt must know thou hast assaulted its beloved Chancellor.

Joseph. Prince Omrah, we are alone. If thou wilt go thy way and play the man, and treat me fairly, this act of thine shall never come to thy father's ears, and not a soul in Egypt shall know thy secret. But if thou play the fool, and seek by any act of treachery to gain what is not thine by fair and open right, thy name shall be a hissing and a by-word in every mouth in Egypt, from the court of Pharaoh to the beggar in his hovel and the prisoner in his dungeon. Fare thee well. (*Extending his hand, which* **Omrah** *takes, looks him in the eyes an instant, and goes out.* **Joseph** *discovers blood upon his hand, traces it up his arm, and finds that he has been cut above the elbow. Binds a handkerchief about it, and is seated upon the bench. Enter* **Asenath.** **Joseph** *rises as she enters.*)

Asenath. (*Starting back in surprise.*) Joseph!

Joseph. (*Advancing.*) Peace be with thee, Asenath.

As. And with thee, Joseph; though I little thought to meet thee here. I came to speak with my father; he should be here at this hour. Hast thou seen him?

Jos. Thine errand is like my own. Thy father hath not been here. I have seen Prince Omrah, and he hath told me thy father hath been delayed, but will be here presently. Sit thou, Asenath, until he come.

As. Joseph, thou art pale. What aileth thee?

Jos. A little accident hath left me with a wound upon my arm. It is of no account.

As. Hast thou had attention, Joseph?

Jos. I have had no opportunity. I received it since I left the city.

As. Sit thou, Joseph, and show it me. I am just come from my visit to the poor, where some had wounds which I have bound. I have bandage left, and a flask of oil and wine. Let me bind thy wound for thee. How didst thou receive it?

(**Joseph,** *without reply, sits and uncovers arm.*)

As. Oh, Joseph, it is a cruel gash, and hath been made by steel. Carest thou not to tell me by what means thou camest by it?

Jos. I cannot tell thee now, my lady Asenath. Didst thou meet Prince Omrah as thou camest hither?

As. I saw him at a distance, but he said nought to me except to recognize my presence. Hath he been here with thee?

(**Joseph** *hesitates, and* **Asenath,** *looking into his eyes, discovers his secret.*)

Asenath. (*Continuing.*) Joseph, thou hidest something from me. Thou art wounded; thou tellest not the cause; thou inquirest about Prince Omrah. Wouldst hide it longer if I should guess thy secret?

Jos. Asenath, knowest thou not that Omrah loves thee to distraction?

Asenath. I think he so believeth.

Joseph. And thou knowest he is heir to the throne of Egypt, and can give to thee a kingdom?

Asenath. Yes, Joseph, I know it all.

Joseph. Thou surely canst not say thou wouldst refuse his offer?

Asenath. Why dost thou ask me, Joseph? Why shouldst thou inquire into my secret when thou hidest from me thine own?

Joseph. Because I love thee, Asenath. I have not known thee from childhood; and I have no right to press my claim upon thy heart against the Prince of Egypt. But I can love thee, Asenath; for love doth ask no leave of princes or of kings. When some magic touch first calls it into being, it builds its altar and erects its shrine. And if, by the stern hand of fate, the answering fire be not permitted to consume its sacrifice, it lights its taper, burns its incense, and keeps its vigil, till the skies brighten and its answer come. So have I waited for thee, Asenath. Since the day I heard thee take upon thyself the vow to serve the God of Israel I have known there was no other in all the world whose love could fill my life or bring me happiness. (*After a slight pause.*) O Asenath, hast thou no answer for me?

Asenath. Joseph, it was not indecision made me hesitate, but lack of words to tell thee all that is in my heart. For since the day of which thou speakest thou hast been my prophet, priest and king. My heart was with thee in the prison, and I ceased not day or night to pray and plan for thy release. And since Jehovah hath granted thee deliverance, I have had no joy but to see thee loved and honored, and no hope but for thy advantage. Thy words have been to me as waters in the desert, and to know that thou wast near me hath kept my soul alive. O Joseph, the wealth and honor of a kingdom would be to me but beggar's rags without thee; and with thee I could share a hovel or a dungeon and be proud to know I shared thy fortune and thy love.

Joseph. (*Embracing her.*) O Asenath, thou gift of heaven! My cup is full.

(*Curtain.* **Asenath** *with arms around* **Joseph's** *neck, her face buried in* **Joseph's** *bosom.*)

Scene Third. *Room in* **Joseph's** *apartments in the palace.* **Joseph** *and the chief steward.*

Joseph. Well, Cadmus, thou hast returned. Hadst thou success in thy pursuit?

Cadmus. Thou sayest we had good success, my lord. The men of Canaan are without, securely guarded.

Joseph. Let them be brought hither.

Steward. (*Goes to the door and commands.*) Officer of the Guard, the Chancellor will have the men of Canaan brought before him.

(*Officer of the guard with four soldiers precede the eleven brothers, and four soldiers bring up the rear. Halt. Face to the left. Front. Soldiers present arms, carry, fall back, close up in rear of prisoners, order arms.*)

Steward. My lord, the men of Canaan. We pursued after them according to thy order. We had scarcely gone an hour beyond Goshen when we overtook them. We charged them with having taken thy cup, but they stoutly denied it, and vowed that if the cup should be found upon any of them, he upon whom it was found should be put to death, and that all the rest should become thy bondsmen. I caused strict search to be made through their baggage, found the mouth of every sack filled with money, and in the sack of the youngest here, besides the money, this cup. Know, therefore, whether it be thine or no. (*Handing* **Joseph** *the cup.*)

Joseph. (*Examining it.*) Certainly it is mine; a present from the King. There is not another like it in all the land of Egypt.

(*The brethren all fall down with their faces to the ground.*)

Joseph. What deed is this that ye have done? Knew ye

not that such a man as I am could certainly divine your secret?

Judah. (*Rising upon one knee.*) What shall we say unto my lord? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants, behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he with whom the cup is found.

Joseph. God forbid that I should require so much, even though ye have been guilty of so great a crime. The man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my servant. As for the rest of you, get ye up in peace to your father. Cadmus, dismiss these ten and let them go their way. Put thou the youngest into custody until I send for him.

Judah. (*Rising to his feet and stepping forward.*) Oh, my lord, let thy servant speak a word, I pray thee, in my lord's ears; and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh.

My lord asked his servants on their former visit, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said to my lord, we have a father, an old man, and a brother, the child of his old age. *His* brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

And thou saidst to thy servants, Bring him down to me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst to thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And when we came home to thy servant, our father, we told him the words of my lord.

And when the corn thou gavest us was consumed, our father said to us, Go again and buy us a little food. And we said, If our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down to Egypt; for we may not see the man's face of

whom we obtain the corn except our youngest brother be with us.

And thy servant, my father, said to us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: the one went out from me and an evil beast tore him to pieces. And if we take this one also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to the grave.

Then thy servant became a surety for the lad unto my father, saying, if I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame forever.

Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me, and I bring down the gray hairs of my father with sorow to the grave?

Joseph. (*With emotion.*) Cadmus, I would be alone with these men. Officer of the Guard, (*officer salutes*), accept my thanks for thy service. Take thee seventy days to thyself, thou and thy men with thee, and my steward shall double thy wages whilst thou art gone. Warn the guard without that none must enter here or cause disturbance till I give them word.

(*Soldiers present and carry arms, face, and march out, followed by the steward.*)

Joseph. Sons of Jacob, arise and stand upon your feet.

(*All rise.* **Joseph** *continues.*)

Ye have heard the words your brother Judah has spoken in your behalf. I have also somewhat to say to you. There dwelt at Hebron, in the land of Canaan, a man who had twelve sons. The two youngest were the sons of one mother, and she was dead.

To the elder of these two the father showed special favor, and gave him a coat as a mark of distinction among his brethren; and because of this his older brethren hated him. The Lord gave to this younger son a dream, and he told it to his brethren. He dreamed that they all bound sheaves in the field, and the sheaves of his brethren made obeisance to his sheaf. And he dreamed again, and, behold, the sun, moon, and eleven stars made obeisance to him. He told these dreams to his brethren, and they hated him yet the more.

And as they tended their father's flocks at Dothan, their brother came to them with messages from their father. And when they saw him, they said among themselves, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Let us kill him, and we will see what will become of his dreams. And they caught him, and stripped his coat from off him, and threw him into a pit. And his coat they dipped into the blood of a beast, and sent it to his father, saying, We have found it. Know thou whether it be thy son's coat or no?

And while they were breaking bread together, they lifted up their eyes, and, behold, a company of Midianites, merchantmen, bearing precious spices, going down to Egypt. And they lifted their brother from the pit and sold him to the merchantmen; and they brought him down to Egypt, and sold him into bondage. But the Lord was with him and raised him up to sit beside the King.

(*Brethren all shrink back and whisper,* "**Joseph.**")

Yes, I am Joseph. Draw near I pray thee unto me. (*They gather round him,* **Benjamin** *nearest, to the front.*) I am Joseph, whom ye sold into Egypt. And thou art **Judah**; (*putting his hands on* **Judah's** *shoulders and kissing his cheek*). And thou art **Reuben,** who didst plead for my

life among thy brethren; (*kissing him also*); and thou art **Simeon** (*kissing him in the same manner, then stepping backward and speaking with emotion, but without kissing them*) and **Gad** and **Asher** and **Issachar** and **Zebulun** — Oh, I know ye all. And thou art **Benjamin**, my best beloved. (*Embracing and kissing him, and weeping on his neck, while all show emotion.* **Joseph**, *collecting himself, continues.*) And now, my brethren, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves because ye sold me hither; for the God of our fathers did send me before your face to keep your souls alive. Two years already hath the famine been in the land; and there are yet five years in which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. You shall now sit down at my table and refresh yourselves; and then hasten ye, and go up to my father, tell him how the Lord hath dealt with me, and say to him for me, Come down to me, and tarry not. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and be near unto me; thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks and thy herds and all that thou hast. There will I nourish thee through the five years of famine, lest thou and thy household and all that thou hast come to poverty. (*Raising his right hand toward heaven, still embracing* **Benjamin** *with the left, while all the brothers bow their heads.*) O God of Israel, who only doest wondrous things, thou hast done great things for us whereof we are glad. Accept the gratitude of thy servants for all the goodness thou hast shown to us and to our fathers. Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and pardon all our offences. Grant to these thy servants that they may be prospered on their journey; and do thou bring them again, with thy servant Jacob, our father, to this place in peace.

All. Amen.

(*Curtain.*)

ACT IV.

Scene. *Throne room in Pharaoh's palace. The court assembled, including* **Joseph's** *brethren,* **Leah,** *and* **Zareda,** *who stands beside* **Benjamin,** *well to front. As the curtain rises shouts are heard without, "The Chancellor. Long live the Chancellor of Egypt. Long live the servant of Jehovah." The court is all looking toward the entrance. (Trumpet. Enter Herald.)*

Herald. Our Lord Chancellor, friend of the King; and his father, Jacob.

Enter Joseph, properly guarded, with his father leaning on his arm, staff in hand. King rises, and the court cry out "Long live the Chancellor! Long live the servant of Jehovah!"

Joseph. Men of Egypt and household of Pharaoh, I thank thee for this cordial greeting. Thy servant, O King. (*Bowing to the King.*) By thy kind request, my father, Jacob, standeth now before thee. And that thou mayest know thou hast before thee no common personage, nor one who needs the poor show of human authority to commend him to thy favor, let me call him by his other name, Israel, a Prince of God; this title he hath received, not from earthly potentate, but from the king of heaven, Jehovah, by whose power thou rulest Egypt, and by whose favor thy people have been kept alive. (*Jacob bows low.*)

Pharaoh. Israel, I bid thee welcome to my court and kingdom. The God whose name thou bearest hath greatly favored thee in years and dignity; and doubly blessed thee in thy son. How old art thou?

Jacob. The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years. Few and full of trouble have

the days of my life been; and have not attained unto the days of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

Pharaoh. Here let thy troubles end. Find thou thy rest among my people, and let thy last days be peace. If in anything thou lackest all Egypt shall be searched until thy comfort be obtained.

Jacob. (*With hands uplifted.*) The Lord command his blessing upon thee, Pharaoh, and on thy kingdom. Give prosperity to thy people, and establish thy throne forever. Amen.

(*Joseph conducts his father to a place beside Leah, whose hand Joseph kisses and turns about.*)

Pharaoh. Joseph.

Joseph. (*Advancing.*) Here, am I, O King.

Pharaoh. These nine years hast thou freely served me and my people, and not a soul in Egypt has gone out or come in without thee. Though thou hast made provision for thy father and thy family, thou hast never yet made one request of Pharaoh for thyself. Ask me now, I pray thee, and, on the honor of a king, thou canst not ask more than shall be fairly thine, if Pharaoh hath the power to grant it.

Joseph. There is but one thing in all thy kingdom I would ask of thee, O King; to give it will not impoverish thee, nor withholding it enrich thee. If thou grant it, though all else were taken from me, I should still be rich. But if thou refuse it, though thou gavest me thy kingdom, I should be poor indeed.

Pharaoh. I pray thee name it, Joseph.

Joseph. The hand of Asenath, the Daughter of the Temple.

Court. Bravo. The Daughter of the Temple. His request, O King.

Pharaoh. Potiphera, hearest thou the Chancellor's request? How sayest thou of thy daughter?

Potiphera. The Chancellor hath gone before thee, O King, and hath obtained full privilege, subject only to thy will.

Pharaoh. Daughter of the Temple, I pray thee come hither, and present thyself before the king.

(**Asenath** *comes forward and kneels at the foot of the throne.*)

Pharaoh. I am Pharaoh. Silver and gold is mine to give, and all manner of beast and bird and creeping thing. Place and honors wait on my appointment; but the going forth of a woman's heart is beyond the power of Kings to order. Love goeth where 'tis drawn, not where 'tis ordered. A power beyond all human let or hindrance fashioneth the soul to join its like and knows its counterpart; and what the gods have joined together, no man can put asunder. Rise, Daughter of the Temple. (**Asenath** *stands.*) Thou hearest the Chancellor's request, and the King's confession. His answer waits on thee. Speak thy free mind, and on my honor as thy king, thy wish shall be respected.

Asenath. Before thou knewest Joseph, or madest him thy Chancellor, O King, 'twas he who taught me how to live and whom to worship. And through all these years I have lived for no one else than him, nor worshiped any other God than Him he serveth. Were Joseph again the humblest servant at the fortress, and *not* the Chancellor of Egypt, I should be proud to own his love and share his fortune. Since thou dost bid me speak, O King, the hand of Asenath is freely thine to give him.

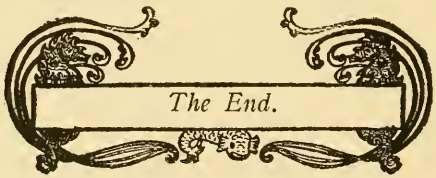
(*The Court applauds. The* **King** *comes down from the throne, takes the hand of* **Asenath**, *leads her to* **Joseph**, *and puts her hand in his.*)

Pharaoh. Joseph, thou hast thy wish. The Daughter of the Temple giveth thee her heart, and Pharaoh giveth thee her hand, and with it the blessing of a grateful sovereign and a grateful nation. And since thou hast not asked him to increase thy bounty, thou hast left the King this privilege as a voluntary gift. Thy house shall be the best but one in all my kingdom, and my steward shall provide the maintenance of thy household. May thy days together be as when the summer smiles along the Nile, and thy seed be as the fruit of Egypt in her plenteous years. Israel, canst thou not command the blessing of thy God upon this union?

(**Jacob** *advances, lifts his hand in blessing, and* **Joseph** *and* **Asenath** *kneel.*)

Jacob. The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

(*Curtain.*)



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